ECTA Center
The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

State Leadership Team
Benchmarks of Quality

RP²: Reaching Potentials
through Recommended Practices

TA&D
NETWORK

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Implementing Recommended Practices Statewide: State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality

Purpose

The *State Benchmarks of Quality* is used by a collaborative State Leadership Team (SLT) to assess progress and plan future actions so that Recommended Practices (RPs) are available for providers and families statewide. The Benchmarks are grounded in the science of implementation which bridges the gap between an evidence-based practice (EBP) and the actual high-fidelity implementation of that practice. Implementation has several stages beginning with assessing needs and exploring which EBPs to implement. Once the SLT has chosen to implement the RPs, the *Benchmarks of Quality* is used to track progress on the stages of planning/installation, implementation and scale-up as well as planning for sustainability. Activities related to sustaining the effort are embedded throughout the process rather than being left until later.

Directions

Benchmarks of Quality is a self-assessment tool that can be completed by the SLT as a whole or in small groups with the results from each group compiled into one consensus document to ensure all SLT members are in agreement. The SLT should use the data for planning future work and tracking progress. Suggestions for how to use the data are found at the end of this document. Progress can be charted using a spreadsheet.

				Element	
Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Not in place 0	Emerging/ Needs improvement 1	In place (Evidence) 2
The "Critical Elements" listed in this column represent the core features and structures needed to implement and sustain the use of EBPs successfully	*The items under the "Benchmarks of Quality" column describe the functions to be performed in order to operationalize the core feature. The relevant implementation stage is aligned with each Benchmark function to help the SLT match activities to the stage of work*	*In the "Who" column, indicate the person or structure (e.g., coordinator, staff, SLT) responsible for that item.*			*For each item marked as "In Place," provide evidence such as documents, data, descriptions, minutes of meetings etc.*

Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Element		
			Not in place 0	Emerging/ Needs improvement 1	In place (Evidence) 2
State Leadership Team (SLT)					
SLT Membership and Logistics	1. The SLT has written criteria for membership which ensures broad representation from a range of stakeholders, programs, and agencies (e.g., early childhood special education, early intervention, higher education, Head Start, families, child care, mental health). [Planning Stage]				
	2. The SLT establishes a clear, written mission/vision [Planning Stage]				
	3. State Leadership Team members are able to clearly communicate the vision and mission of the State Leadership Team. [Planning Stage]				
	4. The SLT adopts written ground rules and logistics including criteria for membership, no substitutes at meetings, agreeing to decisions made in ones' absence, all agencies will share resources, all members attend RPs training, uses effective meeting strategies to ensure meetings are engaging and all members' voices are heard (see the TACSEI website for Meeting Tool Kit and examples of effective meeting ground rules and logistics). [Planning Stage]				
	5. The SLT records decisions from each SLT meeting. [Every Stage]				
	6. The SLT evaluates each meeting and uses the data to improve meetings (see Meeting Tool Kit on the TACSEI website for samples of meeting materials such as meeting evaluations). [Every Stage]				
	7. The SLT achieves consistent attendance and quality of meetings (75% average attendance over the year; and at least an average of 4 on the 5-point meeting evaluations). [Every Stage]				
	8. The SLT meets at least monthly during Planning and Implementation Stages and as needed during the Scale-up Stage. [Every Stage]				
	9. The SLT has a process in place for membership succession within their own agencies (replacing themselves) that ensures continued commitment, understanding, and progress of State Team work. [Sustainability planning]				
	10. The SLT has process in place for orienting new members. [Beginning with Planning Stage]				
Action Planning	11. SLT develops an action plan that includes objectives related to all critical elements of these benchmarks. The action plan guides the work of the Team including designation of work groups, if necessary. The action plan has both short- and long-term objectives. [Every Stage]				

Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Element		
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Action Planning, *continued*	12. The SLT reviews the action plan and updates their progress at each meeting. The action plan has an evaluation component for each action item and the evaluation is reviewed at each meeting. [Every Stage]				
	13. The SLT includes in the action plan sustainability and scale-up objectives and strategies for increasing the number of settings and services using RPs with the goal of achieving statewide, high-fidelity implementation over time. [Every Stage]				
	14. The SLT action plan includes strategies for institutionalizing and embedding RPs into state infrastructures such as Quality Rating Systems and Early Learning Guidelines, etc. [Sustainability planning and Scale-up Stage]				
	15. The SLT annually reviews its mission/vision statement, action-plan outcomes and other evaluation data, SLT membership, ground rules, and logistics, and makes revisions as necessary. The annual review includes a celebration of accomplishments. [Every Stage]				
SLT Coordination and Staffing	16. A SLT member serves as Team Coordinator or Chair (i.e., lead contact) to represent the Team and work with staff to facilitate the work of the SLT and to coordinate internal and external communication. [Planning Stage]				
	17. The RPs Initiative and SLT are supported by funded staff to implement the work. [Beginning with Initial Implementation Stage]				
	18. The SLT sustainability and scale-up planning (in action plan) includes plans for adequate and appropriate professional and administrative staffing. [Beginning with Planning Stage]				
SLT Funding	19. The SLT identifies funding sources to cover activities for at least three years. [Sustainability planning & Scale-up Stage]				
	20. SLT members contribute resources for the work of the action plan (staffing, materials, training, etc.). [Every Stage]				
SLT Communication & Visibility	21. The SLT develops an annual written report on the progress and outcome data and distributes it to programs, funders, and policy makers. [Beginning with Initial Implementation]				
	22. The SLT identifies and implements dissemination strategies to ensure that stakeholders are kept aware of activities & accomplishments (e.g., website, newsletter, conferences). [Every Stage]				
	23. The SLT develops a written awareness and marketing plan that includes a presentation (e.g., presentation based on annual data and report) to policy makers and current and potential funders. It is used to recruit programs and individuals to participate in the RPs initiative. [Initial Implementation Stage]				

Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Element		
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Authority, Priority, and Communication Linkages	24. The RPs align with the goals and objectives of each agency represented on the SLT [Every Stage]				
	25. Each SLT representative is authorized to make decisions for their agency related to the RPs Initiative and/or is able to return a decision to the SLT within two-weeks. [Every Stage]				
	26. SLT members engage in activities within their agency that result in support for the RPs Initiative (e.g., succession planning, presenting annual reports, orientation presentations). [Every Stage]				
	27. The SLT develops written communication protocols for regularly hearing from staff who are charged with implementing the RPs as well as the Master Cadre, demonstration sites, implementation sites, and communities. The protocols focus on bringing to light any challenges that need to be attended to by the SLT and that cannot be resolved by individual programs or staff. [Initial Implementation Stage]				
Family Involvement					
Family Participation and Communication	28. The SLT includes representation from family organizations. [Planning Stage]				
	29. The SLT makes training opportunities related to the RPs available for families. [Every Stage]				
	30. The SLT develops and employs mechanisms for communicating with families about the initiative. [Every Stage]				
	31. The SLT develops mechanisms for family members to provide feedback at least annually on the quality of the RPs experienced by their children. [Every Stage]				
Implementation and Demonstration Programs/Sites					
Implementation and Demonstration Programs/Sites	32. The SLT develops readiness criteria, recruitment and selection procedures, and MOUs for programs participating in the initiative as Implementation Programs/Sites. Implementation Programs/Sites have a Program Leadership Team and at least one internal coach [Initial Implementation Stage]				
Implementation and Demonstration Programs/Sites, *continued*	33. The SLT has recruitment and selection process and MOUs for Demonstration Programs/Sites and partners with them to provide data that show the effectiveness of the RPs. The sites provide tours and information for interested parties. Demonstration sites have a Program Leadership Team and at least one internal coach [Initial Implementation Stage]				
Implementation Communities	34. The SLT (where appropriate) develops readiness criteria, recruitment and acceptance procedures, and MOUs for community entities to participate in the initiative. All participating communities agree to having a Leadership Team, coaches, and trainers [Scale-up Stage]				

Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Element		
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	35. The SLT develops statewide capacity (funding, staffing) for training and supporting new program and community Leadership Teams, and Master Cadre in the high-fidelity adoption and implementation process while continuing to support the high fidelity of the original implementation and demonstration programs. [Implementation & Scale-up Stage]				
Professional Development					
Master Cadre	36. The SLT establishes a statewide network or Master Cadre of RPs professional-development (PD) experts to build and sustain high-fidelity implementation. [Implementation Stage]				
	37. The SLT develops an identification process, recruitment and acceptance criteria, and MOUs for RP Master Cadre members.[Initial Implementation Stage]				
	38. The SLT develops statewide RPs training capacity that includes providing ongoing training and support for Master Cadre members who, in turn, train and support community and program staff and Leadership Teams. [Implementation Stage]				
	39. The SLT creates and puts in place a quality-assurance mechanism (e.g., certification, approval) to ensure that trainers are able to provide training in the RPs accurately and effectively; and that coaches are able to coach practitioners to implementation fidelity resulting in success for children, families and providers [Implementation Stage]				
	40. The SLT implements a plan ensuring that programs and communities statewide have access to Master Cadre members, including necessary resources and on-site coaching that result in the high-fidelity adoption, implementation, and sustainability of RPs. [Planning Stage]				
Ongoing Support and Technical Assistance	41. The SLT employs a technical-assistance plan for ongoing support and resources for the RPs Master Cadre, demonstration sites, implementation sites and communities to ensure high-fidelity implementation and sustainability. Such support includes planning for turn-over and succession of key individuals. [Sustainability planning and Scale-up Stage]				
	42. An external coach (Master Cadre) is available to meet at least monthly with each emerging Program Leadership Team (emerging teams are teams that have not met the high-fidelity implementation criteria). [Implementation Stage]				
	43. An external coach (Master Cadre) is available to meet at least quarterly with Program Leadership Teams who have been implementing the RPs for at least one year with high fidelity. [Sustainability planning]				

Critical elements (and sub-elements)	Benchmarks of Quality	Who (SLT, staff, etc)	Element		
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Evaluation/Data-Based Decision Making					
Data-Based Decision Making	44. All programs, communities, and Master Cadre submit the data agreed upon in their respective MOUs. [Implementation Stage & Sustainability planning]				
	45. Training, materials, and support are available to Master Cadre members, programs, and communities on what data to collect, why, and how to use the data for making decisions for improving outcomes for children, providers, programs, and communities as well as how to submit the data. [Every Stage]				
	46. A process is in place for programs and communities to enter and summarize the data elements above as well as training on how to use the data for program improvement. [Every Stage]				
	47. A process is in place for the SLT to access the data or summaries of the data described above. The Team uses these data as part of their action plan for regular evaluation as well as the annual evaluation report. [Every Stage]				
	48. The SLT annually prepares an evaluation report that describes: a) the extent to which program- and community-wide high-fidelity adoption is being implemented, sustained, and scaled-up; b) the impact of program-wide adoption and/or community-wide adoption on child, provider, and program outcomes; and c) the impact of training and coaching. The SLT uses the evaluation report for their own progress monitoring and planning as well as for providing a public report on outcomes [Every Stage]				
	49. The SLT provides a public celebration of outcomes & accomplishments annually. [Every Stage]				

Next Steps

- For each benchmark rated as a 0 or 1, develop/update action plan item with the date, status, and plans for improvement.
- For each benchmark rated as a 2, update the appropriate action item. Note plans for sustainability and scale-up, and include the progress and evidence in the annual report.
- Chart progress on a spreadsheet.

Acknowledgements

This document was adapted from:

Fox, L., Hemmeter, M.L., & Jack, S. (2006). *Early Childhood Program-Wide Positive Behavior*

Support Benchmarks of Quality. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida.

Jack, S. & Fox, L. (2010). I*mplementing the Pyramid Model Community-Wide: Benchmarks of Quality*. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida.

PBS District Readiness Checklist 1.12.09.doc – *FLPBS: RtIB Project at University of South Florida*. (from Heather George via email communication).

PBS Implementation and Planning Self-Assessment (2002). Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. (retrieved from www.PBIS.org)

Smith, B., Dunlap, G. & Blase, K. (2013) *Implementing the Pyramid Model State-Wide: The State Benchmarks of Quality.* www.challengingbehavior.org

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State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality:
Process for Self-Assessment

Suggested Process (3 Hours Total)

The Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) document can be shared with SLT members beforehand to review, but it is important that individuals not assign a rating before meeting together. Each individual may not have all the information necessary to inform a rating that reflects the current status of each benchmark.

Small Group (approximately 80 minutes)

Once together, the SLT members will be split into three to four groups, with a maximum of four people per group. No more than two groups should work in the same room (this helps to minimize noise and distraction from the discussion). Each small group will have approximately 80 minutes to discuss each benchmark of quality, come to consensus on a rating, and make note of any comments to be shared with the full group (either in the margin or on a separate notes page). If group members disagree on the rating, we recommend choosing the lower number. This may be more accurate if someone believes the number to be lower, and you want to be sure to show improvement overtime. Each small group designates a spokesperson who will report to the large group on their selected rating. *Each small group should appoint a timekeeper in order to get through all 49 benchmarks.*

Large Group (approximately 80 minutes)

Come back together as a large group with the purpose of reaching consensus among the small groups on a single rating for each of the benchmarks. Ask for a volunteer to take notes on ratings and any comments the SLT decides should accompany a given rating. *Ask for a timekeeper to ensure the SLT successfully obtains a rating for each of the 49 benchmarks.*

Start with Benchmark #1. Each group will be asked for their rating only. If the ratings are the same the SLT will move on to #2 without sharing comments. If the ratings differ, comments will be shared and discussion will follow in order to reach consensus for a single rating for the benchmark.

Next Steps

Have the scored *Benchmarks of Quality* document scanned and sent to the ECTA Center State Leadership Team TA staff. The ECTA SLT TA staff sends to the ECTA Data Manager who develops an Excel spreadsheet of the data to graphically depict the ratings. This completed file is then shared back with the SLT members and can be used in displaying their progress over time.

At the next SLT meeting, members will prioritize benchmarks to address via action planning. The SLT can choose three or four individual benchmarks or a cluster of benchmarks within a critical elements category to prioritize or put all of them on the action plan with short- and long-term goals.

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State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality: Action Plan

Directions
1. Rate Benchmarks of Quality.
2. For each benchmark rated as a 0 or 1 and prioritized, develop/update action plan item with the date, status, and plans for improvement.
3. For each benchmark rated as a 2, update the appropriate action item. Note plans for sustainability and scale-up, and include the progress and evidence in the annual report.
4. Chart progress on a spreadsheet.

Date: _____

BoQ Item # Date/Rating	Action Steps/ Plans for Improvement	Who	When	Outcome/Date